

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SY-04 SCCT-02 A-01 OPR-02 IO-14

OMB-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 AID-20 DRC-01 /148 W

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O 251215Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8414

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 1516

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS SU

SUBJ: BSO TERRORISTS

REF: KHARTOUM 1503

1. SUMMARY. MINSTATE FONAFFS CONFIRMED TO BELGIAN CHARGE AND MYSELF EARLY JUNE 25 THAT BSO PRISONERS RELEASED AND HAD LEFT COUNTRY. HE SOUGHT EXPLAIN GOS ACTION IN TERMS RECENT AREA DEVELOPMENTS. CHARGE AAD I SAID WE WOULD REPORT HIS REMARKS TO OUR GOVERNMENTS WHICH WOULD NO DOUBT BE SENDING US APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. NEW MINSTATE FONAFFS JALLAL MOHAMMED AHMED (NAMED TO JOB JUNE 24) CALLIN IN NEWLY ARRIVED BELGIAN CHARGE AND MYSELF 0900 LOCAL JUNE 25 IN CONNECTION RELEASE BSO PRISONERS. OBVIOUSLY EMBARRASSED, AHMAD BEGAN BY REFERRING TENTATIVELY TO "RECENT EVENT" AND ASKING WHETHER WE HAD QUESTIONS THEREON. I REPLIED HAD BEEN SEEKING SINCE 1915 HOURS JUNE 24 SOME OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF RADIO REPORT. FONMINISTERHAD MADE HIMSELF UNAVAILABLE AND THIS WAS FIRST OPPORTUNITY FOR CHARGE AND MYSELF TO BE INFORMED OFFICIALLY OF APPARENT RELEASE EIGHT CONVICTED MURDDERERS. AHMED REPLIED THAT HE REGRETTEED FACT WEHAD NOT BEEN OFFICIALLY INFORMED

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SOONER. WHEN HE HAD LEFT FONMINISTRY APPROXIMATELY 1400 HOURS

JUNE 24, PRESS RELEASE (PARA 2 KHARTOUM REFTTEL) HAD BEEN IN COURSE PREPARATION. INTENTION HAD BEEN SEND COPIES US, BELGIAN AND SUADI EMBASSIES, BUT "MECHANICS" HAD BROKEN DOWN. I ASKED HOW LONG FONMINISTER KHALID REMAINING IN CITY. AHMED (AFTER CHECKING WITH LTETAKER) SAID FONMIN WOULD BE HERE FOR DAY OR TWO PRIOR DEPARTING ON WEST EUROPEAN TRIP. I NOTED IN REPLY I HAD BEEN SEEKING APPOINTMENT WITH KHALID SINCE RELEASE BECAME KNOWN TO US THROUGH FOREIGN RADIO BROADCAST. WASHINGTON MIGHT FIND IT DIFFICULT UNDERSTAND WHY I HAD NOT BEEN RECEIVED. AHMAD NOTED HE ALSO MEMBER OF CABINET AND WILL BE SERVING AS ACTING FONMIN IN KHALID'S ABSENCE (WHICH IS MOST OF THE TIME).

3. AHMED THEN ATTEMPTED SOMEWHAT LAMELY EXPLAIN GOS ACTION. RECALLING HIS PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP LAT AMBASSADOR NOEL AND DCM MOORE, HE SAID ALL SUDANESE CONCERNED AT ACTION WHICH HAD BEEN TAKEN AGAINST THEM. HE WISHED ASSURE US TOP LEVEL GOS HAD CONSIDERED LONG AND HARD PRIOR DECIDING ON RELEASE ACTION. IT WAS REALIZED USG AND GOB MIGHT BE CONCERNED BY THIS ACTION BUT AREA CONSIDERATIONS MADE IT NECESSARY. NOT ONLY WAS PALESTINIAN ISSUE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE FOR ALL ARABS BUT GOS HAD CONCLUDED RECENT WELCOME IMPROVEMENT IN AREA SITUATION, TO WHICH PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY HAD CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH, SHOULD NOT BE "SET BACK" BY SOME ACTION ON PART GOS WHICH MIGHT INCREASE TENSION. INDICATING I UNDERSTOOD BUT DID NOT ACCEPT AHMED'S EXPLANATION, I REMINDED HIM SECRETARY HAD RECENTLY REITERATED PUBLICLY OUR STRONG OPPOSITION TO TERRORISM AND CONVICTION THAT IT CANNOT BE ENDED UNLESS GOVERNMENTS IN WHOSE JURISDICTION TERRORISM TAKES PLACE ARE PREPARED TO TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES (SECRETARYS PRESS CONFERENCE OF JUNE 6).

4. BELGIAN CHARGE SAID HE WISHED ASSOCIATE HIMSELF WITH MY REMARKS. CALLING ATTENTION REFERENCE IN FOREIGN MINISTRY STATEMENT TO "DEATH OF TENS OF INNOCENT CHILDREN AND WOMEN LIVING IN REFUGEE CAMPS", HE NOTED AMBASSADOR NOEL AND HIS TWO MURDERED COLLEAGUES EQUALLY INNOCENT. AHMED ENDEAVORED EXCUSE WORDING ON BASIS FOREIGN MINISTRYS LACK SKILLS IN PREPARING PAPERS OF THIS TYPE. WHILE SAYING I WISHED AGREE WITH CHARGE'S POINT, I STRESSED THAT CENTRAL ISSUE DID NOT CONCERN WORDING OF STATEMENT BUT RATHER SURPRISING RELEASE CONVICTED MURDERERS WHICH IT ENDEAVORED EXPLAIN. I

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ASSURED AHMED I WOULD REPORT HIS COMMENTS TO MY GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD NO DOUBT WISH TO CONSIDER ITS POSITION IN LIGHT TOTALITY OUR RELATIONSHIPS, AFTER WHICH I WOULD BE SUITABLY INSTRUCTED. CLUTCHING AT WORD "TOTALITY" AHMED REJOINED THAT THIS WAS POINT HE WAS TRYING TO GET ACROSS. GOS ACTION NEEDED BE SEEN IN TERMS TOTALITY ITS RELATIONSHIPS. "RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY", GOS HAD CONCLUDED THAT IT SHOULD TAKE THE ACTION IT DID. STATEMENT WAS ATTEMPT EXPLAIN. CITING PROVERB THAT ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN

WORDS, I RESPONDED THAT MY GOVERNMENT WOULD NOW HAVE TO CONSIDER ITS POSITION IN LIGHT WHAT GOS HAD DONE. CONCLUDING BY EXPRESLING REGRET THAT MY FIRST MEETING WITH NEW MINSTATE HAD OCCURED UNDER SUCH UNFAVORABLE AUSPICES, I INDICATED WOULD NO DOUBT BE SEEING HIM AGAIN SOON WHEN MY INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED.

5. AHMED SAID HE WOULD BE SEEINGSAUDI "AMBASSADOR" (ACTUALLY HE IS CHARGE) AFTER BELGIAN AND I DEPARTED AND WOULD MAKE SAME EXPLANATION TO HIM SINCE PREMISES SAUDI EMBASSY HAD BEEN VIOLATED.

6. COMMENT. BOTH SUBSTANCE AND MANNER GOS ACTION RAISE IMPOR-
TANT QUESTIONS FOR US RE FUTURE USG/GOS TIES. AHMED'S FEEBLE
PRESENTATION AND LACK BRIEFING MAKE CLEAR HE
WAS INSTRUCTED BY FONMIN KHALID SEE BELGIAN AND MYSELF
MORE IN ROLE LIGHTNING ROD THAN ANYTHING ELSE. HIS COMMENTS
SERVE CONFIRM THAT BASIC DECISION RELEASE MEN (ACCORDING ONE REPORT
THEY LEFT FOR SYRIA BY SPECIAL SUDAN AIR FORCE PLANE ABOUT 1700
HOURS JUNE 24) WAS TAKEN, AND DRAFTING RELEVANT PAPERS PROBABLY
INITIATED, PRIOR TERMINATION HIGH COURT REVIEW OF CASE, IF NOT
CONCLUSION LOWER SUPERIOR COURT SESSION. MOREOVER, HIGH COURT'S ANNOU-
NCED

REFERRAL OF CASE TO NIMEIRI WITH RECOMMENDATION COMMUNICATION RE
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES APPEARS AN EXTRAORDINARY PROCEDURE
UNDER SUDANESE LAW, IF IT TECHNICALLY ILLEGAL. THERE CAN BE
NO QUESTION BUT THAT NIMEIRI AND HIS CLOSE ADVISORS CONCLUDED
THAT IT PREFERABLE RISK ANNOYING OURSELVES AND BELGIANS
THAT CONFIRMING SENTENCES AND RISKING PALESTINIAN WRATH.
IN SO SAYING, I BELIEVE NIMEIRI'S MOTIVES PRIMARILY
POLITICAL RATHER THAN SECURITY IN NATURE, BUT RISK TO HIMSELF,
SUDANESE AIRCRAFT AND SUDANESE INSTALLATIONS ABROAD OBVIOUSLY
PLAYED ROLE IN DECISION. LACKING REQUESTED INSTRUCTIONS
(KHARTOUM REFTTEL) PRIOR MEETING WITH AHMED, I INTENTIONALLY AVOIDED
MAKING SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS ON RELEASE ON PERSONAL BASIS , LEST
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THIS SIMPLY UNDERLINE ABSENCE FORMAL INSTRUCTIONS.
HOPE I WAS SUCCESSFUL IN INDICATING TO AHMED THAT THERE HAD BEEN
INSUFFICIENT TIME FOR THESE BE RECEIVED HERE BUT THAT I WAS NOW
CABLING FULL REPORT ON BASIS OF WHICH DEPT WOULD NO DOUBT REACT.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST AT LEAST PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS
BY NIACT IMMEDIATE MESSAGE LEST OUR CONTINUED OFFICIAL SILENCE
HERE BE MISCONSTRUED BY GOS.
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